

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 9 are pending in the present application. By this Amendment, independent claims 1, 4 and 8 have each been amended. No new matter has been added.

Examiner Interview:

The courtesies extended by Examiner Genco and Supervisory Patent Examiner (SPE) Christensen during the December 22, 2004 personal interview conducted at the U.S. Patent Office are gratefully appreciated. The substance of such interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

As To The Merits:

As to the merits of this case, the Examiner sets forth the following rejections:

- 1) claims 1, 4, 6 and 7-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Inagaki et al. (U.S. Patent No.: 6,084,634) in view of Heller et al. (U.S. Patent No.: 6,396,539);
- 2) claims 1, 4, 6 and 7-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Inagaki et al. (JP 09-135388) in view of Heller et al. (U.S. Patent No.: 6,396,539);
- 3) claims 2, 3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Inagaki et al. (U.S. Patent No.: 6,084,634) in view of

Heller et al. (U.S. Patent No.: 6,396,539) in view of (Applicant's admitted prior art);

- 4) claims 1, 4, 6 and 7-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Inagaki et al. (JP 09-135388) in view of Heller et al. (U.S. Patent No.: 6,396,539) in view of Carroll et al. (U.S. Patent No.: 6,160,578); and
- 5) claims 2, 3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Inagaki et al. (U.S. Patent No.: 6,084,634) in view of Heller et al. (U.S. Patent No.: 6,396,539) Carroll et al. (U.S. Patent No.: 6,160,578) in view of (Applicant's admitted prior art);

Each of these rejections is respectfully traversed.

It is respectfully submitted that during the December 22, 2004 personal interview an agreement was reached with respect to a proposed amendment to distinguish the present claimed invention over the applied references. More specifically, it was agreed that the applied references failed to teach or fairly suggest using only non-defective pixels in the vertical optical black pixel portion for generating the correction reference signal.

For example, as discussed on page 14, line 22 – page 15, line 18 and page 18, line 16 – page 19, line 18 of the present specification only non-defective pixels of the vertical optical block pixel portion are used to generate a correction reference signal.

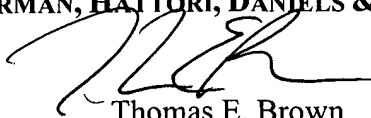
Accordingly, each of the independent claims 1, 4 and 8 has been amended to include this feature. Further, in view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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